# Freedom, Ethical Choice and the Hellenistic Polis

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**Summary**
This paper examines ideas of individual freedom in the Hellenistic city-states (c. 323–31 BC). It concentrates on the civic ideas expressed in the laws and decrees of Hellenistic cities, inscribed on stone, comparing them with Hellenistic historical and philosophical works. It places different Hellenistic approaches alongside modern liberal, neo-Roman republicanand civic humanist theories of individual liberty, finding some overlaps with each of those modern approaches. The argument is that the Hellenistic Greeks developed innovative ways of combining demanding ideals of civic virtue and the common good with equally robust ideals of individual freedom and ethical choice. They did so not least by adapting and developing traditional Greek approaches close to modern civic humanism, in ways very relevant to modern debates about how to reconcile civic duty, the common good and pluralism.

**Keywords**: Polis, Hellenistic, liberalism, republicanism, civic humanism.

## 1. Introduction

This paper analyses ideas about the freedom of the citizen of a city-state (polis) which were debated during the Hellenistic period (c. 323–31 BC).[1] That period covers the centuries after the conquests of Alexander the Great, which precipitated the expansion of polis culture across the eastern Mediterranean and beyond. Citizens of Hellenistic poleis were the contemporaries of the most vibrant period of republican thinking and practice in Rome, which has been so stimulating for modern debates about liberty.[2] Despite the flourishing of that republican centre at its western end, the Hellenistic world as a whole has often been seen as no fertile breeding ground for thinking about civic freedom and participation. It is true that the Hellenistic world was dominated politically by the large Hellenistic monarchies, the successors to Alexander's empire (especially the Seleucids, Ptolemies and Antigonids), and then by the expanding Roman Empire. Nonetheless, self-governing Greek cities continued to exist, and flourish, within and between these empires, seizing opportunities to exercise political agency both within their own borders and in their relations with kings and Romans.[3]

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[1] Epigraphic corpora are cited here in accordance with the abbreviations in the *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*.

[2] See e.g. Q. R. D. Skinner, 'The Paradoxes of Political Liberty', in S. McMurrin (ed.), *The Tanner Lectures in Human Values, vol. VII* (Cambridge, 1985), 227–50; V. Arena, Libertas *and the Practice of Politics in the Late Roman Republic* (Cambridge, 2012).

[3] The continued flourishing of the polis and democracy in the Hellenistic period has now been richly demonstrated: see, for example, Ph. Gauthier, *Les cités grecques et leurs bienfaiteurs* (Athens and Paris, 1985); J. Ma., *Antiochos III and the Cities of Western Asia Minor*, revised paperback edition (Oxford, 2002); V. Grieb, *Hellenistische Demokratie: politische Organisation und Struktur in freien griechischen Poleis nach Alexander dem Grossen* (Stuttgart, 2008); P. Hamon, 'Démocraties grecques après Alexandre : à propos de trois ouvrages récents', *Topoi* 16.2 (2009), 347–82; Chr. Mann and P. Scholz (eds.), *"Demokratie" im Hellenismus: Von der Herrschaft des Volkes zur Herrschaft der Honoratioren?* (Mainz, 2012).

Hellenistic poleis' citizens and intellectuals developed and promoted a vibrant, diverse range of ideas about the good polis and the good citizen. There was much diversity in approaches to citizenship across the wide sweep of the Hellenistic world, from modern France to modern Afghanistan, but this chapter will focus on some broad shared trends. Hellenistic citizens not only preserved earlier Greek civic ideals, but also adapted and reimagined them in order to preserve civic life within their new, increasingly cosmopolitan environment. The resulting Hellenistic ideas about democracy, civic virtue and citizenship, which have been much less intensively studied than their Classical Greek forerunners, add a different dimension to modern debates about ancient Greek approaches to the city and liberty, and their contemporary significance.[4] In the case of Hellenistic ideals, this contemporary significance lies especially, I will argue, in Hellenistic citizens' efforts to reconcile increasingly prominent ideas of individuality, individual entitlement and individual ethical choice with still demanding notions of the common good and political virtue.

Hellenistic political debates can be studied through rich evidence for civic ideology and political thought preserved from many poleis. This evidence comes principally in the form of civic inscriptions: the decisions (decrees) and laws of cities which they inscribed on stone for public display. These inscriptions, often much richer and more complex in their rhetoric than those of the Classical period, tended to reproduce the language of the proposals, and supporting speeches, voted on by civic assemblies. They therefore give insights into Hellenistic civic rhetoric.[5]

The available inscriptions make the Hellenistic period particularly well-suited to the application to ancient history of contextual methods in the study of political thought.[6] This is because the rich rhetoric of routine, pragmatic Hellenistic inscriptions can be used to reconstruct the broader conceptual and linguistic worlds and debates within which contemporary intellectuals, especially historical authors (such as Polybius) and philosophers (such as the Stoics), developed their more reflective and sophisticated political language and arguments. Consideration of Greek civic language and ideas in this period also enriches the contextual background informing our understanding of Roman republican political thought: the citizens and intellectuals of the Roman Republic were in constant contact with the civic life and thought of the Greek East; and elite Roman education was based on study of Greek philosophy and rhetoric, as well as Roman law.[7]

The most pronounced, explicit interest of the Hellenistic cities in the specific value of freedom was a concern with collective freedom (*eleutheria*) and autonomy (*autonomia*): the freedom and autonomy of whole poleis, or of other political communities, such as federal leagues incorporating many cities. This was partly a matter of protecting the rule of the local *demos* (*demokratia*), and the integrity of its laws, from internal domination by a tyrant, or from lower-level political corruption. This was made most explicit in laws against tyranny, setting out procedures for pre-empting or counteracting tyrannical coups.[8]

Truly free self-government by the local *demos* was also recognised as dependent on liberty from external domination. Indeed, cities made ideals of collective *eleutheria* and

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[4] For a recent investigation of this whole question: W. Nippel, *Antike oder moderne Freiheit? Die Begründung der Demokratie in Athen und in der Neuzeit* (Frankfurt, 2008).

[5] Compare A. Chaniotis, '*Paradoxon*, *Enargeia*, *Empathy*: Hellenistic Decrees and Hellenistic Oratory', in Chr. Kremmydas and K. Tempest (eds.), *Hellenistic Oratory: Continuity and Change* (Oxford, 2013), 201–216.

[6] See e.g. Q. R. D. Skinner, *Visions of Politics. Vol. I: Concerning Method* (Cambridge, 2002).

[7] See E. S. Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome*, two volumes (Berkeley, 1984); E. Rawson, *Intellectual Life in the Late Roman Republic* (London, 1985); J.-L. Ferrary, *Philhellénisme et impérialisme : Aspects idéologiques de la conquête romaine du monde hellénistique, de la seconde guerre de Macédoine à la guerre contre Mithridate* (Rome, 1988).

[8] For these laws, see D. Teegarden, *Death to Tyrants! Ancient Greek Democracy and the Struggle against Tyranny* (Princeton 2014).

*autonomia* central to their complex diplomatic negotiations with kings and Romans.[9] As Ma shows, this involved intricate, sometimes paradoxical rhetoric: cities had to represent themselves as grateful, loyal beneficiaries of grants from above, including guarantees of freedom, while also asserting that they were securely independent from their benefactors, partly as a result of those (continuing) benefactions themselves. In the 190s BC, for example, the Iasians of Western Asia Minor used their intact civic institutions and collective political will to award extensive praise and honours to the Seleucid Antiochos III, noting that he had freed their city from slavery, by removing the preceding Antigonid garrison, and that he was guarding their *demokratia* and *autonomia*.[10] In the early first century BC, the city of Ephesus could even present its resistance to the anti-Roman rebel Mithridates of Pontus as aimed at upholding, simultaneously, both Roman hegemony (*hegemonia*) and 'common freedom' (*koine eleutheria*).[11]

This Hellenistic interest in collective freedom, which has been quite intensively researched, has much relevance to modern debates about sovereignty, and the multiple complex, hybrid or partial forms it can take.[12] The Hellenistic cities foreshadow modern attempts to develop complex notions and practices of collective freedom and autonomy, which move away from assertion of unilateral, unbridled independence, to create more scope for negotiation and compromise with both superior powers and peers.

The focus of this paper is, however, the less intensively studied issue of the role of individual freedom in Hellenistic civic discourse and political thought.[13] To some degree, concern with individual citizen freedom was implicit in Hellenistic rhetoric about collective *eleutheria* and *autonomia*. It is a commonplace of much modern political theory that the collective freedom of a whole republic, enshrined in laws and a constitution, trickles down into individual freedom for its citizens. Some Hellenistic Greeks may well have recognised a similar close connection between collective and individual freedom. The link was implicit in the use of the adjective *eleutheroi*, the plural of *eleutheros* ('free'), to describe citizens of free cities;[14] this suggested that each citizen took his own share in his city's freedom. It is, however, significant that Hellenistic citizens did not often make the link explicit. In general, they did not tend to focus on the consequences of collective *eleutheria* and *autonomia* for the standing of individual citizens or groups within the collective, vis-à-vis their peers.[15] Tellingly, Hellenistic Greeks, like their Classical predecessors, did not normally talk about the political *eleutheria* or *autonomia* of individual citizens in their relations with fellow citizens, or with their polis: they did not establish a verbal analogy between the freedom of a

[9] See Ma, *Antiochos III*; Grieb, *Hellenistische Demokratie*; S. Dmitriev, *The Greek Slogan of Freedom and Early Roman Politics in Greece* (Oxford and New York, 2011); S. Wallace, *The Freedom of the Greeks in the Early Hellenistic Period. A Study in Ruler-City Relations* (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2011).

[10] Ma *Antiochos III*, text no. 26B, col. I, ll. 9–18, together with the broader analysis in Ma's ch. 4.

[11] *I.Ephesus* 8, ll. 11–12.

[12] See, for example, H. Kalmo and Q. R. D. Skinner (eds.), *Sovereignty in Fragments: The Past, Present and Future of a Contested Concept* (Cambridge, 2010).

[13] Classical Athenian ideas of personal freedom have, by contrast, been intensively studied: see recently, for example, R. Wallace, 'Law, Freedom and the Concept of Citizens' Rights in Democratic Athens', in J. Ober and C. Hedrick (eds.), *Demokratia: A Conversation on Democracies, Ancient and Modern* (Princeton, 1996), 105–119; R. Wallace, 'Personal Freedom in Greek Democracies, Republican Rome, and Modern Liberal States', in R. Balot (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought* (Chichester and Malden, 2009), 164–77; A. Saxonhouse, *Free Speech and Athenian Democracy* (Cambridge, 2006); P. Cartledge and M. Edge, '"Rights", Individuals, and Communities in Ancient Greece', in Balot, *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought*, 149–63; P. Liddel, *Civic Obligation and Individual Liberty in Ancient Athens* (Oxford, 2007).

[14] E.g. A. Chaniotis, *Die Verträge zwischen kretischen Städten in der hellenistischen Zeit* (Stuttgart, 1996), text 40c, l. 13 *CID* 4.104, l. 5 (concerning the citizens of Delphi, in an early second-century letter to the Delphic Amphictyony from a Roman commander); compare Polybius 18.44.2.

[15] Polybius' approach to the Achaian League, discussed in section 2, is a significant exception.

polis among other poleis and powers, on the one hand, and the freedom of the individual citizen among other citizens, on the other. When it was used to describe the standing of an individual vis-à-vis other individuals or groups, *eleutheria* was predominantly used to pick out the legal status of a free person, as opposed to a slave; for reasons explored further towards the end of section 2, personal *eleutheria* was not normally a question of *political* liberty.

When it came to representing the good internal functioning of civic life and good inter-citizen relations in their public, inscribed rhetoric, Hellenistic citizens tended to emphasise other values than individual freedom: in particular, core values of civic virtue, civic engagement, benefaction to the community, reciprocity and reciprocal justice, captured in concepts such as justice (*dikaiosyne*), equality (*isotes*), virtue (*arete*), love of honour (*philotimia*), solidarity (*philia*) and gratitude (*charis*). The stability and success of a polis were presented as built on these foundations, rather than directly on the individual free status, action, thinking and speech of its citizens. Conversely, it was recognised that these foundations of civic life could be directly undermined by tyrannical or external domination.[16]

Although these other values were dominant in Hellenistic civic discourse, it is nonetheless possible to detect signs of an accompanying interest in something with significant similarities to the modern notion of individual freedom – similarities sufficiently significant to warrant identifying a Hellenistic interest in the freedom of the individual citizen within the polis, vis-à-vis fellow citizens. In order to identify these signs, it is necessary to look beyond the conventional vocabulary of freedom (*eleutheria*, *autonomia*). On the one hand, it is necessary to take account of other vocabulary (e.g. *prohairesis* or *hairesis*, with a basic meaning of 'choice'). On the other, it is also important to reconstruct concepts and ideas which were expressed or embodied in Hellenistic rhetoric, institutions and practices, but which Hellenistic citizens did not come to describe using a single word or words.

In an example of the latter approach, analysis of some Hellenistic laws and rhetoric reveals an interest in what can be classed, following proposals of D. Held, as 'protective' forms of individual freedom:[17] freedom from interference, or from domination or dependence. These 'protective' forms are the focus of the next section (section 2). In other contexts, Hellenistic citizens concentrated, partly through their interest in *prohairesis* and *hairesis*, on the other main type of individual liberty distinguished by Held: 'developmental' freedom. According to a 'developmental' approach, active participation in a polis enables citizens to develop, and put into action, their human capacities; it thus secures the freedom of self-realisation, which may also involve a degree of self-mastery. Section 3 discusses Hellenistic concern with this second type of freedom.

Interpreting Hellenistic civic ideas about freedom through these lenses contributes to the project of this volume by enabling comparison with three prominent approaches to individual liberty in contemporary political theory: the approaches which have come to be known as liberal, neo-Roman republican, and civic humanist.[18] Although Held introduces his 'protective' and 'developmental' dichotomy to distinguish neo-Roman republicanism from what has come to be defined as civic humanism, a broad notion of 'protective' freedom can also, as he acknowledges, incorporate liberal approaches. These liberal approaches constitute a broad family, whose shared characteristic is to identify freedom as protection of individuals from obstacles to the pursuit of their life projects. Under liberalism, all citizens are encouraged to pursue their interests and projects, provided that doing so does not interfere

[16] See *I.Ilion* 1 (c. 280 BC) for a polis envisaging the disruption caused by tyrannical rule to everyday civic life.
[17] See D. Held, *Models of Democracy*, third edition (Stanford, 2005), 35, distinguishing 'protective' from 'developmental' forms of republicanism, adapting older distinctions between 'negative' and 'positive' liberty.
[18] Compare Nippel, *Antike oder moderne Freiheit?*, for discussion of overlaps and differences between ancient and modern liberty.

with the similar freedoms of other citizens. The whole system is guaranteed and reinforced through a system of fair laws and fair procedures for resolving disputes and co-ordinating action.

Liberalism has a key difference from the other main 'protective' approach, neo-Roman republicanism, inspired by the Roman Republic. That republican approach identifies freedom, not merely with protection against actual interference, but with protection against the very possibility of arbitrary interference. If there are strong defences within a state against any such arbitrary interference, each of its individual citizens can live free from the threat of domination by, or dependence on, the will of any other individual. This ambitious type of freedom can be achieved, according to neo-Roman republican arguments, only through a complex participatory system of government, in which citizens collaborate in making laws to bind them all, governing the republic, and protecting the republic and its laws. The key difference between this approach and the main modern 'developmental' approach, which contemporary political theorists have come to describe as 'civic humanism', is that civic humanism treats civic participation and civic virtue, not as instrumental to protecting the freedom of individual citizens, but as goods in themselves, intrinsic to a good and free life for individuals.[19] The term 'civic humanism' has a complex twentieth-century history in the historiography of the Italian Renaissance, and is sometimes used in a looser way, but I am using it here solely as many contemporary political theorists do, to denote this particular basic theory of citizenship and the good life, distinguished from neo-Roman republicanism.

A key historical question is how the Hellenistic Greeks responded to their contemporaries in the Roman Republic. Did Hellenistic Greeks, influenced by their contemporaries in the Roman Republic, inflect their civic ideals with republican principles, placing a particular stress on the role of civic institutions, virtues and participation in securing freedom from domination and arbitrary power, both for whole cities and for their constituent citizens and parts? Or did Hellenistic Greeks preserve and adapt a distinctive Greek tradition, closer to modern civic humanism, which treated civic participation and substantial civic virtue more as goods in themselves, crucial to self-realisation? This paper finds traces of both tendencies. Hellenistic cities did take a strong interest in 'protective' freedoms, though often in a way more attractive to modern liberals than to modern republicans. There is, however, much more compelling evidence, especially from the later Hellenistic period, for Hellenistic citizens' interest in revising and enriching, and applying to their day-to-day civic life, Greek traditions closer to civic humanism.

## 2. The 'protective' role of the Hellenistic polis: guaranteeing 'protective' liberty?

This article will focus on the rhetoric of inscribed civic decrees, but this section starts with Polybius, because he is the most explicit Hellenistic advocate of 'protective' liberty. Indeed, he is perhaps the closest thing to a neo-Roman republican thinker among Hellenistic Greeks. His analysis of the Roman Republic has itself strongly influenced the subsequent republican tradition. Significantly for the purposes of this article, Polybius also applied his political approach to contemporary Greek cities and states, especially his home state, the Achaian League, a complex federation incorporating many of the poleis of the Peloponnese. Polybius presents the federal Achaian League as a model of a true democracy. According to him, its diverse member cities participated voluntarily, on equal terms, within a framework of shared institutions (magistrates, councillors, laws, courts, coinage and weights and measures). The system was based on equality before federal laws and institutions for all members, regardless

[19] See Skinner, 'The Paradoxes of Political Liberty', for an overview of the modern debate concerning these three models of liberty; compare Held, *Models of Democracy*, 35.

of size or length of membership. This institutional set-up was reinforced through equality and frankness of speech (*isegoria* and *parrhesia*) for all member cities and their citizens.[20]

Polybius' idealised vision of the Achaian League has many features which would appeal to modern liberals: his Achaian League was a voluntary association of states for their mutual security and advantage, which provided a contractual framework for them to pursue their overlapping interests, negotiate about their differences, and make reciprocal exchanges. This association of free states guaranteed property rights and prevented radical social reform. At the same time, its common currency and weights and measures enabled and reinforced profitable commercial relations among its free, property-owning members.

In spite of the liberal connotations of some of Polybius' picture, his account would probably appeal more directly to modern neo-Roman republicans. It is not entirely straightforward to capture Polybius' approach to the precise nature of the freedom provided by the League to the parts within the whole, since he makes no systematic, explicit remarks on this question. Nonetheless, his various admiring comments about the League can be combined to reconstruct an approach to this issue with significant overlaps with modern republicanism.

In Polybius' presentation, the precise type of 'protective' political freedom (involving the protection of equality and frankness of speech – *isegoria*, *parrhesia*) which the League provided to all its members was of a different kind from any which an individual Hellenistic monarch or hegemonic polis could have bestowed; this was not simply a matter of liberal protections which any power structure could safeguard. This is because members' freedom was guaranteed by an egalitarian, participatory legal and political framework including and binding all, rather than by any individual or individual city's arbitrary, reversible will.

Indeed, the whole structure of the League was designed to guarantee that no individual Peloponnesian city could dominate its neighbours. As Polybius explicitly comments, earlier leading cities in the Peloponnese had failed to unify the region, because they each sought their own domination (*dynasteia*), rather than 'common freedom' (*koine eleutheria*).[21] By implication, the Achaian League had succeeded in creating common freedom, by unifying the Peloponnese within a system of political equality. Some members had joined willingly (as *hairetistai*), others through persuasion; and even those which had been forced to join had come to recognise the League's attractions. Also in accordance with the republican ideal, cities' and citizens' political participation – their exercise of equality and frankness of speech, *isegoria* and *parrhesia* – was not only enabled by this quasi-republican system, but also helped to sustain it.[22]

The republican thrust of Polybius' model of the Achaian League could have had some earlier Athenian and wider Greek roots,[23] but it is also consistent with his long residence in Rome: his civic thinking reflects the developing republican tradition of Rome itself, marked by its special concern with using political and legal structures to defend the free status of the individual (his *libertas*) against the possibility of slavish dependence or domination.[24] This makes Polybius' conception of freedom quite distinctive among Hellenistic approaches. Hellenistic philosophers of different schools certainly took a strong interest in how to achieve inviolable security and happiness for individuals, but they tended to see the route to it lying through the personal self-mastery secured by ethical knowledge,

[20] Polybius 2.37.9–11; 2.38.6–8.
[21] Polybius 2.37.9.
[22] Polybius 2.38.6–8. This last point should be read as an overlap with republicanism at a basic conceptual level, rather than a practical level, because ancient Roman republicans, at least, were not so explicit in identifying political speaking, as opposed to voting, as central to liberty-guaranteeing political participation. Valentina Arena made this point to me.
[23] See Cartledge and Edge, '"Rights"', on quasi-republican tendencies in the Classical Athenian democracy.
[24] See Arena, Libertas, esp. 46–8.

practice and virtue, not through political participation. They invoked politics mainly as a source of metaphors of power and control suitable for describing the well-governed, independent soul.[25]

Though influenced by Roman thinking, Polybius did not simply take over Roman ideas, but adapted them in a way very relevant to modern political theory: he showed how quasi-republican institutions and values could be realised in a very large and heterogeneous community, including practically the whole Peloponnese.[26] Indeed, it was probably partly the very federal character of the Achaian League which made it readily amenable to being represented as a quasi-republican state. The Achaian League of Polybius' day incorporated the many traditionally hostile states of the Peloponnese, including, for example, both Sparta and its longstanding enemies, Megalopolis and Messene. This made it straightforward to imagine bitter animosity within this enlarged political community, including mutual attempts to dominate fellow members; there was no difficulty in presenting League institutions as a defence against that animosity. In the case of a single polis, by contrast, it would have been problematic to start from the assumption that the individual members or parts would inevitably aspire to dominate one another. To Greek thinking, fellow citizens were normally members of a shared descent-group, bound by cults, history and values, whose instincts would be ones of solidarity, or at least rational co-operation.

This is not to say that the Hellenistic poleis took no interest, in their inscribed public rhetoric, in 'protective' freedoms for their individual citizens. Their interest in such 'protective' freedoms was often overshadowed by more community-centred, civic humanist concerns, of the kind explored in the next section. Nonetheless, it is clearly attested in certain kinds of inscribed civic texts: in particular, inscribed decisions re-establishing civic order after conflict or disorder,[27] or creating civic order on a larger scale after some kind of merger of two poleis.

It is probably fair to say, however, that when these texts express an explicit concern with the 'protective' freedom of individual citizens, their approach chimes more with modern liberal than with modern republican concerns: as explored below in the following paragraphs, their explicit concern is with the basic security of individual citizens and their property, and with the fair treatment of individual citizens through civic institutions. Here too relevant Hellenistic Greeks can be seen to have developed further 'protective' approaches already explored in the Classical Athenian democracy: in this case, Classical Athenian approaches partly resembling and partly sharply different from modern liberalism.[28] In the case of inscriptions, even more than with Polybius, an obvious problem is that mainly pragmatic laws and decrees do not present systematic philosophies to underpin their contents: it is necessary to reconstruct the connecting threads of their approaches, sticking as closely as possible to their explicit language and provisions.

One Hellenistic inscription likely to have been prompted by unrest is the civic oath which was sworn by all the citizens of the polis of Itanos on Crete in the early Hellenistic period. Citizens had to promise not to betray the city or its territory, or to engage in subversive meetings, but they also had to promise explicitly to respect the entitlements of individuals: they would not plot against any individual citizen, or interfere with individuals'

[25] Compare A. A. Long, *From Epicurus to Epictetus: Studies in Hellenistic and Roman Philosophy* (Oxford, 2006), ch. 1, esp. 10.
[26] Polybius 2.37.11. For a full recent analysis of Polybius' representation of the Achaian League, including his blending of Greek and Roman models: C. B. Champion, *Cultural Politics in Polybius' Histories* (Berkeley, 2004), ch. 4.
[27] On such texts: A. Dössel, *Die Beilegung innerstaatlicher Konflikte in den griechischen Poleis vom 5.-3. Jahrhundert v. Chr.* (Frankfurt, 2003).
[28] See e.g. Wallace, 'Law, Freedom and the Concept of Citizens' Rights' and 'Personal Freedom'; Liddel, *Civic Obligation*.

private property or with relations of credit and debt.[29] Explicit concern with the basic security of individual citizens against mistreatment could also surface in agreements merging together two poleis or settlements.[30]

Other inscribed texts concerned with civic reconciliation or unification also often made explicit their concern to ensure the fair, just treatment of individuals. A common way to reconcile citizens or pre-empt conflicts in a Hellenistic city was to summon 'foreign judges' from another polis, as impartial interpreters or enforcers of local polis law. These foreign judges often started by trying to mediate or arbitrate between citizens, before resorting to formal judgement. It was routine for decrees praising such foreign judges to mention that they had acted fairly and justly in judging and settling cases, with respect for local law.[31] The system of employing foreign judges could even be explicitly represented as designed to guarantee fair treatment for individuals. The clearest epigraphic expression of this view comes in a second-century BC decree passed by the Hellenistic citizens of Priene in Western Asia Minor, praising the people of the more northerly polis of Alexandria Troas for the way they had summoned Prienian foreign judges to resolve internal disputes. The Prienians claim that the Alexandrians have taken good care of the judges, 'so that equal and just treatment may be provided for all citizens, because it is most of all through this that democracy is preserved' (ὅπως ἴσα καὶ δίκαια π[ᾶσ]ι τοῖς πο[λίταις πα]ραγίνηται, διὰ τὸ μάλιστα διὰ τοῦτο τηρεῖσθαι τὴν δημοκρατίαν).[32]

The Prienians thus associated closely the preservation of democracy with fairness and justice for individuals. The order of the causation in this statement chimes more with liberal than with republican emphases: the Prienians claimed that the key objective, from which democracy flows, is that each citizen should receive fair and just treatment. They appear to have held this aim to be paramount even if the fair treatment had to be guaranteed with the help of impartial outsiders, such as these foreign judges, rather than purely through the democratic interaction of fellow citizens. A republican would be likely to see the causality running in the opposite direction: democratic rule, involving full and equal participation by citizens (and only by citizens), ensures the best and most just outcome for individuals.

In other cases, Hellenistic inscriptions did suggest or imply that participatory civic institutions, and associated civic virtues, could help to protect the entitlements of individuals.[33] Those inscriptions did not, however, claim that civic institutions and virtues went beyond being helpful, towards being absolutely necessary for securing those individual protections. This was partly because the protections envisaged in such decrees, especially access to fair dispute resolution, were intrinsically amenable to being guaranteed equally well by impartial outsiders. Roman and neo-Roman republicanism, by contrast, concentrates on the role of civic institutions in protecting individuals' distinctively *political* freedoms, which by their very nature can be guaranteed only by a participatory civic framework: the freedoms

[29] *IC* III iv 8, ll. 14–16, 21–4.

[30] See, for example, *SEG* 26.1306 (union of Teos and Kyrbissos, early Hellenistic), ll. 4–5, 42–3 (requiring the Teians to swear not to abandon any one of the citizens living at Kyrbissos, as well as to defend the whole settlement militarily; property is not mentioned).

[31] E.g. W. Blümel and R. Merkelbach, *Die Inschriften von Priene* (Bonn, 2014), henceforth *I.Priene*$^2$, no. 119, new edition of *I.Priene* 44, ll. 15–16. For discussion of the foreign judges phenomenon: C. V. Crowther, 'Iasos in the Second Century BC: Foreign Judges from Priene', *BICS* 40 (1995), 91–138; Dössel, *Die Beilegung*, 249–72; A. V. Walser, 'ΔΙΚΑΣΤΗΡΙΑ – Rechtsprechung und Demokratie in den hellenistischen Poleis', in Mann and Scholz, *"Demokratie" im Hellenismus*, 74–108.

[32] *I.Priene*$^2$ 119, ll. 12–13.

[33] See, for example, the Coans' praise for the civic virtue and devotion to the common good of their citizen Theugenes, who oversaw the effective running of a visit by foreign judges from Smyrna to resolve local disputes fairly for all citizens involved (*IG* XII 4 1 59, c. 150–100 BC, esp. ll. 23–30). Compare Classical Athenian ideology: Liddel, *Civic Obligation*, shows that fourth-century Athenian democrats saw individual liberty and the widespread performance of civic obligations as closely intertwined.

to participate and vote in civic institutions, whose exercise in turn guarantees the overarching *libertas* or liberty of the individual citizen from arbitrary domination or dependence.[34] Participating politically and voting in the polis were rarely treated by Hellenistic Greeks as individual or sectional entitlements or freedoms, in need of protection by the polis, or as means to secure each citizen's discrete freedom from arbitrary domination. Rather, they were normally handled in a more 'developmental' than 'protective' vein: as civic duties, and as opportunities to participate in the civic community. This was a continuation of longstanding Classical Greek tendencies.[35] Hellenistic citizens' political participation and voting could be expected to be aimed at promoting the collective flourishing of the whole polis; but it could also be perceived as a legitimate opportunity to bargain with fellow citizens concerning interests, entitlements and just deserts, in order to achieve a mutually beneficial, equitable consensus.[36]

One relevant Hellenistic example of approaches to voting comes from the end of the third century BC. At that point, a union of the two island poleis of Cos and Kalymna into a larger political unit, through a so-called *homopoliteia*, was established or re-established. All citizens of the unified polity had to swear the same oath. This oath required them to promise to respect and enhance the new enlarged polis. Each citizen also had to swear to act as both 'a just judge and an equal citizen (δικαστὰς δίκαιος καὶ πολίτας ἴσος), voting by hand and stone (χειροτονῶν καὶ ψαφιζόμενος), without favour, for whatever seems to me to be beneficial for the *demos*'.[37] Political participation, guided by standards of equality, justice and the common good, was thus a basic duty shared by all citizens. This shared participation was again valued partly for its instrumental role as a guarantee of fairness for individuals in dispute resolution in the courts. However, it was also, crucially, treated as a means to create solidarity and like-mindedness, as opposed to catering for pluralism. The participatory political process was expected to help to bring out, and reinforce, solidarity and unity of purpose among citizens: in an example of a wider Hellenistic tendency, when the Coans some years later recorded the result of a vote on a motion to honour a citizen, 885 votes were recorded in favour, and none against.[38]

Treating political participation and voting more as duties and opportunities than as protected entitlements was consistent with the more general approach of the Hellenistic cities to citizenship, and its characteristic practices. When granting citizenship or some of its privileges to outside individuals, cities could register in their decrees a concern with 'protective' freedoms similar to those encountered above: in particular, the basic security of the person and property of the enfranchised individual within his new polis.[39] Nonetheless, the dominant explicit aim of such decrees was not to protect the enfranchised individuals, but the crucial 'developmental' aim of enabling their full participation in the civic community:[40] citizenship grants often expressed the aspiration that those enfranchised as citizens should

[34] See Arena, Libertas, esp. ch. 2.
[35] See, for example, A. Saxonhouse, *Free Speech and Athenian Democracy* (Cambridge, 2006).
[36] Compare B. Gray, Stasis *and Stability: Exile, the Polis and Political Thought, c. 404–146 BC* (Oxford, 2015), ch. 4, section 3.
[37] *IG* XII 4 1 152, ll. 27–9.
[38] *IG* XII 4 1 59, ll. 47–8.
[39] See, for example, *IG* II/III$^3$ 452 (Athens, 334 BC), ll. 31–4; *SEG* 53.565 (Phthiotic Thebes, third century BC, which must be either a citizenship grant or a grant reintegrating a pre-existing citizen on new terms), ll. 1–13.
[40] For this characteristic feature of Greek citizenship, contrasted with Roman, see the influential Ph. Gauthier, 'La citoyenneté en Grèce et à Rome: participation et intégration', *Ktema* 6 (1981), 167–79; and, more recently, citing much further bibliography, R. Brock, 'Law and Citizenship in the Greek Poleis', in M. Canevaro and E. Harris, *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Greek Law*; article published online August 2015, DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199599257.013.15. Concerning related ideas in Greek philosophy: M. Schofield, *Saving the City: Philosopher-Kings and Other Classical Paradigms* (London, 1999), ch. 8.

participate in, or have a share in (*metechein*), all the things already enjoyed in common by their new fellow citizens.[41]

Others modern interpreters of the ideology of Hellenistic civic inscriptions might detect more signs of explicit concern with the protection of distinctively political freedoms for individual citizens. For one thing, the value of *parrhesia* ('frankness of speech'), which elsewhere certainly evokes citizens' protected equal entitlement to political participation (see above on Polybius), does occasionally feature in Hellenistic cities' inscriptions. However, it is used to describe a personal virtue, rather than as a term for a protected individual entitlement. Even as a virtue *parrhesia* could in principle evoke particular protections guaranteed by the community for its members, which enable its exercise. However, Hellenistic inscriptions tended to attribute this virtue to benefactors in their relations, not with the home *demos*, but with powerful outsiders, especially kings. The Peripatetic philosopher Prytanis of Karystos was honoured by the Athenians for exercising *parrhesia* 'as if on behalf of his own country' in speaking up for Athenian interests as an envoy in the 220s BC.[42] The Roman citizen and benefactor of Tenos L. Aufidius Bassus was said to have shown a similar type of *parrhesia* in a different context in the first century BC: as well as showing flexibility with regard to debts owed to him by the Tenians, he exercised justice, piety and 'fitting *parrhesia*' in trying to persuade those 'burdening' the citizens (τοὺς ἐπιβαροῦντας), perhaps especially other creditors, to desist.[43]

The reason why *parrhesia* was not normally associated in Hellenistic decrees with public speech within the home *demos* was presumably that relations among fellow citizens were expected to be so equal, trusting and free of fear as to make a special, noteworthy degree of *parrhesia* unnecessary. Kings and other elite figures of the Hellenistic world, by contrast, had the power to threaten individuals who moved beyond flattery towards 'saying everything'. An unusual case of a citizen being honoured for general *parrhesia* is the case of a second-century BC citizen of Pergamon, whose name is lost, who was honoured for having 'adorned his life with the finest *parrhesia*' (κ[εκ]όσμηκε τὸν αὑτοῦ βίον τῆι καλλίστηι παρρησίαι).[44] This exceptional case is perhaps explained by the fact that Pergamon in the mid-second century was not only a polis but also the scene of a royal court, the Attalid court with which this man was intimately connected: the issue of speaking truth to the powers of the Hellenistic world was especially pertinent in this jointly civic and royal context.

The other main reason why other modern interpreters might identify more concern with protection of individuals' distinctively political liberties is that civic inscriptions of the kinds examined here often committed citizens to respecting the constitution or political system (*politeia*), and its constituent laws (*nomoi*). For example, the oath of unification from Cos-Kalymna strongly binds citizens not to overturn the existing *politeia* or *nomoi*;[45] similar clauses are found in oaths of reconciliation after discord.[46] These strong pledges of fidelity to the constitution might be seen as implicit promises by citizens to respect one another's reciprocal, individual political liberties to participate and vote, within the framework of the institutions and laws of the *politeia*.

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[41] See, for example, *FD* III 3.214 (citizenship grant of the Chians to the Aetolians, mid-third century BC), ll. 8–9; *Tit. Cal.* 53 (Kalymna, mid- to late third century BC), ll. 13–18.

[42] *IG* II/III$^3$ 1147, ll. 19–21; for a similar Hellenistic case of a foreigner praised for exercising *parrhesia* on behalf of the honouring city's interests in diplomacy involving kings, see *I.Kallatis* 7 (honours of Kallatis for Stratonax and the people of Apollonia), ll. 11–15.

[43] *IG* XII 5 860, ll. 49–52.

[44] *I.Pergamon* I 224 (c. 150 BC), ll. 9–10; see also F. Canali De Rossi, *Selezione di iscrizioni storiche tardo-ellenistiche* (Rome, 2000), no. 189.

[45] See *IG* XII 4 1 152, ll. 14–18, 21–3.

[46] See *IG* XII 4 1 132 (Telos, early Hellenistic), ll. 128–36.

This is indeed the most propitious ground for a quasi-republican interpretation of Hellenistic civic ideology on stone, and should be taken seriously. There is, however, a strong risk of anachronism in this interpretation: Hellenistic Greeks would have been more likely to see the defence of the *politeia* as serving principally the collective aims usually emphasised in the same decrees, especially stability, well-being, concord (*homonoia*), justice and shared, democratic rule.[47] Those collective achievements created the framework for citizens to undertake the civic participation, sometimes explicitly presented as intrinsically rewarding for them, explored above and in section 3 below.

There is a similar risk of anachronism in seeing decrees' concern with upholding the *politeia* and democracy as expressing a more fundamental implicit aspiration, also quasi-republican, to protect separate individuals, rather than the collective, from arbitrary domination or dependence. This is partly because of a factor which underlies many of the reasons already adduced for seeing Hellenistic cities' 'protective' impulses as distinctive from republican ones. Roman republicans developed, in a way very influential on their modern successors, a global concept of an overarching condition of political *libertas*, which flows from and synthesises the separate rights (*iura*) of the free citizen, including especially the rights to vote and participate in decision-making.[48] By contrast, the Hellenistic Greeks did not have a single, coherent, widely understood concept which pinpointed the overall result for the individual of the protections which the polis and citizenship provided.

There is an obvious Greek word, *eleutheria*, which might in principle have come to denote such a concept, but it does not seem to have developed relevant meanings. Even when Hellenistic cities praised benefactors who had rescued or ransomed their citizens from literal captivity and slavery, they did not represent this returning of citizens to their proper, participatory role as citizens as a process of 'freeing' or 'returning to freedom': instead, as Bielman points out, they used the language of salvation (*soteria*), to describe these benefactors 'saving' captive and enslaved citizens.[49] There were strong rhetorical considerations, particular to the circumstances, in play: cities did not want to give the impression that pirates or other captors of citizens had the capricious power to overturn the truly free status of their citizens, who would always remain proudly free people. This usage does, however, give an interesting insight into underlying Hellenistic thinking: such decrees exploited the assumption that personal free status was a fixed state into which an individual was normally born (though it could sometimes be achieved by special grant). Personal free status was not widely conceived, as in the Roman world, as an intrinsically mutable condition, dependent for its continuation on a complex matrix of legal institutions and law-governed inter-personal relationships. This prominent Greek approach made the notion of personal *eleutheria* unsuitable for metaphorical development into a quasi-republican global notion of *political* liberty, conceived as freedom from any arbitrary domination and dependence, conditional on a matrix of political institutions and rights.

To sum up this section, there are weaknesses in any stereotypical view of the Greek polis as obsessed with collective goods and unity, and uninterested in the protection of individual citizens and their entitlements. The Hellenistic poleis, developing approaches of their Classical predecessors, did take a marked, explicit interest in protecting their individual citizens, and thus with 'protective' freedoms.[50] It is, however, significant that their interest in

[47] See, for example, *IG* XII 4 1 132, esp. ll. 4–5, 125–6, 128–36.
[48] See Arena, Libertas, 47–8, discussing (for example) Cicero II *Verrines* 2.16, 5.143.
[49] A. Bielman, *Retour à la liberté. Libération et sauvetage des prisonniers en Grèce ancienne. Recueil d'inscriptions honorant des sauveteurs et analyse critique* (Athens, 1994), 212, 273, 332–3.
[50] I argue in Gray, Stasis *and Stability*, that this interest in the protection of citizens' entitlements should be seen as one strand of a broader fourth-century and Hellenistic approach to politics, which I there call 'Dikaiopolitan'. As I explain there, that 'Dikaiopolitan' approach also included more positive components, encouraging citizens to participate in bargaining through civic institutions to identify overlapping interests.

'protective' freedom was usually quite divergent from republican approaches; the Roman-influenced Polybius is an interesting exception. The Hellenistic cities did not give special prominence to a paradigm of the always alert, ferociously independent individual citizen, anxious to avoid personal domination or dependence at all costs, with the aid of civic institutions. When they adopted a 'protective' approach, Hellenistic citizens did not widely subscribe to a global notion of 'protective' political freedom, along modern republican lines. Rather, they tended to envisage a range of loosely connected separate 'protective' freedoms with a social and economic focus, more in the manner of modern liberals.

These separate 'protective' freedoms have been seen to include safety of person and status, or 'salvation' (*soteria*, as in documents about liberation from captivity); security of property and contracts; and access to fair, impartial and just civic institutions. Indeed, the safety (*asphaleia*) of both individuals and the polis could be seen to be guaranteed simultaneously by the smooth running of magistracies and checks on corruption.[51] Significantly, words such as *soteria* and *asphaleia* could readily be transferred from the collective to the individual, unlike *eleutheria* and *autonomia*. Hellenistic citizens were also sometimes promised by their polis other protections from threats to a baseline level of well-being. They might expect to benefit from some protective 'care' (*epimeleia*) from their polis, at least indirectly, for example through public support and honours for doctors responsible for taking care of citizens.[52] In addition to protection of their health, Hellenistic citizens might also expect some protection of their more immaterial well-being: protection of their honour (*time*), including against the *hybris* of possible challengers.[53] Again more in the manner of modern liberals than republicans, Hellenistic cities valued 'protective' freedoms within this diverse assortment even if they had to be guaranteed through recourse to outsiders as impartial judges and arbitrators; Hellenistic cities might even welcome the role of Hellenistic kings in guaranteeing individual entitlements.[54] Despite these different overlaps with modern liberalism, there are also crucial differences: for example, there is little attested Hellenistic civic interest in central liberal preoccupations such as protection of freedoms of thought or private life.

Although stereotypical pictures of the Greek polis need to be revised in the light of these considerations, such stereotypes do also have a strong basis in historical reality: Greek cities did tend to concentrate in their self-presentation, not on protection of individual citizens, but more on the 'developmental' role of civic law, institutions and interaction in fostering individual character and self-fulfilment. They thus advocated something closer to the 'Aristotelian perfectionism',[55] with strong affinities with the modern political theoretical category of civic humanism, which is often held to be the principal ancient Greek civic ideal. The overlaps of the Hellenistic poleis' civic life and ideology with modern civic humanism are the concern of the next section. The Hellenistic poleis both developed and adapted the more civic humanist features of their Classical predecessors. They did so not least by introducing innovative ways of discussing individual ethical choice, even in the very public, widely accessible and apparently humdrum context of debates and decrees about honours for benefactors.

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[51] See *I.Priene*$^{2}$ 68, revised edition of *I.Priene* 112, ll. 20–27.
[52] See *IG* XII 4 1 30 (Cos, mid-third century BC), esp. ll. 7–10.
[53] It was, for example, normal in Greek poleis to describe the basic entitlements of citizens as 'honours', *timai*; a citizen who formally lost citizen rights was 'without honour' (*atimos*). See, for example, D. Kamen, *Status in Classical Athens* (Princeton, 2013), esp. 78; Schofield, *Saving the City*, 125.
[54] E.g. *IG* XII 4 1 135 (Naxos, c. 280 BC).
[55] See recently J. Cooper, 'Political Community and the Highest Good', in J.G. Lennox and R. Bolton (eds.), *Being, Nature and Life in Aristotle* (Cambridge, 2010), 212–64.

### 3. 'Developmental' liberty: enabling ethical choice in the Hellenistic polis

The central conviction of modern civic humanism – that political participation and civic virtue make for the best life for an individual[56] – was central to Classical Greek political philosophy, especially that of Aristotle and the Peripatetics. It was, however, in the later Hellenistic period (after c. 150 BC) that it was most eloquently and forcefully expressed in public political rhetoric with a practical focus and wide audience. Much Greek civic rhetoric and epigraphy, both Classical and Hellenistic, took for granted that civic participation and commitment were goods in themselves: for example, cities' honorary decrees for citizens presented in glowing terms the honoured citizen's life of civic contributions, which, they implied, was a lifestyle both admirable and desirable, good for both city and individual. In the later Hellenistic period, exceptionally, some civic honorary decrees spelled out the benefits of civic engagement for the citizen himself. Political participation and speech could be singled out: in the later second century BC, the citizens of Colophon praised their citizen Polemaios for judging to be fine the 'adornment' or 'credit' which comes to both his life and his country (τὸν ... τῶι βίωι καὶ τῆι πατρίδι κόσμον), not only from his bodily exertions in athletics, but also from his leading role in public affairs, exercised through speech and political action (ἀπὸ τοῦ προίστασθαι τῶν κοινῶν λόγω<ι> καὶ πράξει πολιτικῇ).[57]

Other types of civic engagement, especially financial solidarity with fellow citizens, could also be presented as beneficial for the engaged citizen himself. Perhaps the clearest case of a decree's interest in the intrinsic importance of civic virtue for the virtuous citizen, as opposed to its extrinsic rewards in honour and prizes, comes in a later Hellenistic decree of the people of Priene for their citizen Athenopolis. The Prienians claimed that Athenopolis kept his promises of civic contributions, recognising that what 'belongs to himself most all', or perhaps 'is most important for himself', is his assiduousness towards those together with whom he conducts his life (νομίζων το[ῦτο α]ὐτῶι μέγιστον ὑπάρχειν τὸ τὴν πρὸς τοὺς συ̣ν̣αναστρ[ε]φο[μέν]ους ἐκτένειαν συντηρεῖν).[58] Still later in the Hellenistic period, the Prienians honoured A. Aemilius Zosimos, a naturalised citizen of Priene. They praised him for loving Priene as if it were his own fatherland, and contributing enthusiastically to Prienian civic life, at the expense of his narrow private interests: he did so 'knowing that virtue alone brings the greatest fruits and signs of gratitude from foreigners and citizens who hold the fine in honour' (συνιδὼν δ' ὅτι μόνη μεγίστους ἀποδίδωσιν ἡ ἀρετὴ καρποὺς καὶ χάριτας π[αρὰ ξένοις κ]α̣ὶ ἀστοῖς τὸ καλὸν ἐν τιμῇ θεμένοις).[59] The 'fruits' which *only* civic virtue could procure for Zosimos presumably included the honours he received, but they could well also have been seen to include the intrinsic benefits of fulfilling the role proper to anyone belonging to a community, alluded to in the earlier Athenopolis decree.[60] Those intrinsic benefits were also invoked by the Otorkondeis, a sub-division of Mylasa to the south, when in 76 BC they praised the citizen Iatrokles for releasing struggling debtors from their debts, 'thinking that justice is more profitable than injustice' (λυσιτελεστέραν ἡγούμενος τὴν δικαιοσύ[νην] τῆς ἀδικίας).[61]

It might be thought that, through these more civic humanist and 'developmental' aspects of their ideology, the Hellenistic cities reproduced community-centred features of the Classical Greek polis and Classical Greek political thinking which have alienated many

[56] Compare Held, *Models of Democracy*, esp. 35, for an overview of this modern approach. H. Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago, 1958), is one of the most famous developments of this basic modern position.
[57] *SEG* 39.1243, col. I, ll. 16–22.
[58] *I.Priene*$^2$ 63, new edition of *I.Priene* 107, ll. 17–21.
[59] *I.Priene*$^2$ 68, ll. 13–14.
[60] Compare with these decrees Aristotle's vision of man as a political animal; part of man's natural function is to exercise civic virtue (see Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* 1178b5–6).
[61] *I.Mylasa* 109, ll. 7–10.

modern advocates of ideals of liberty: for example, strong patriotism, closely entwined with exclusivity and suspicion of outsiders, which went together with a strong focus on warfare. Most importantly for this paper, the Hellenistic cities might be thought to have perpetuated an older Greek disregard for individual liberty and difference, because they continued to impose a single model of the good life – the life of engaged, patriotic civic participation – on all.[62] However, a strong case can be made that the Hellenistic cities actually adapted traditional Greek community-centred civic ideals, especially in the later Hellenistic period, in a way which compensated for these features.

For example, Hellenistic cities often relaxed exclusivity and particularism.[63] They often celebrated abstract virtues, without specific local content, such as love of the good or the fine, which could easily be exercised and appreciated, not only by home citizens, but also by outsiders and immigrants, such as A. Aemilius Zosimos of Priene and all those honouring him.[64] Among these abstract virtues the intrinsically universalist and explicitly humane virtue of *philanthropia* ('love of humanity') was increasingly celebrated, after c. 150 BC even as a tie between fellow citizens, who would earlier usually have been expected to interact solely through more visceral, particularist bonds;[65] the Hellenistic cities were perhaps moving towards something with a stronger claim to the name of civic *humanism*.

This all made it much easier to envisage more cosmopolitan versions of civic community, with broader horizons: from a more flexible local community of all those 'living their lives together', both citizens and foreigners,[66] to institutionalised larger civic units, including both mergers of poleis (such as the Cos-Kalymna *homopoliteia*) and larger federal units (such as the Achaian League). This increasing cosmopolitanism, and co-operation across borders, went hand in hand with another significant shift, also most pronounced after c. 150 BC: the rising importance of culture and education, relative to warfare, at the centre of civic life. Warfare and military training long remained important,[67] but the more cultural dimension of education in the gymnasium, the polis' principal educational institution, came into increasing focus. Benefactors were regularly praised for their educational and cultural contributions, especially while exercising the office of gymnasiarch, charged with running the gymnasium.[68]

Most importantly for my argument here, the Hellenistic cities also gave greater prominence in their public rhetoric to individual choice: in particular, the choices of individual citizens to aid their polis, based on both reflection and emotion. They did so by giving a new prominence to individuals' psychology and choices in public epigraphy, especially honorary decrees for benefactors. In the case of earlier, more formulaic civic honorary decrees for home citizens, a style which endured through the Hellenistic period too, civic commitment tended to be treated more as an unquestionable given, or automatic reflex: the life of virtue (*arete*), goodwill (*eunoia*) and enthusiasm (*prothymia*) was the taken-for-

[62] For a relevant recent critical approach to the Greek polis, from a modern liberal perspective, see A. Ryan, *On Politics. A History of Political Thought: from Herodotus to the Present* (London 2012), esp. chs. 2–3, 14–15.
[63] Compare A. Heller and A.-V. Pont, *Patrie d'origine et patries électives : les citoyennetés multiples dans le monde grec d'époque romaine* (Bordeaux, 2012).
[64] See again *I.Priene*$^2$ 68, ll. 13–14.
[65] B. Gray, 'The Polis Becomes Humane? *Philanthropia* as a Cardinal Civic Virtue in Later Hellenistic Honorific Epigraphy and Historiography', *Studi ellenistici* 27 (2013), 137–62.
[66] See again *I.Priene*$^2$ 63, ll. 17–21; *I.Priene*$^2$ 68, ll. 13–14 .
[67] J. Ma, 'Fighting Poleis of the Hellenistic World', in H. van Wees (ed.), *War and Violence in Ancient Greece* (Swansea, 2000), 337–76; Th. Boulay, *Arès dans la cité : les poleis et la guerre dans l'Asie Mineure hellénistique* (Pisa and Rome, 2014).
[68] See recently D. Kah and P. Scholz (eds.), *Das hellenistische Gymnasion* (Berlin, 2004). For examples of relevant honorific language, see again the Prienian decrees for Zosimos, *I.Priene*$^2$ 68–70.

granted lifestyle and mindset of citizens born into patriotism.[69] Many Hellenistic decrees, by contrast, especially after c. 150 BC, gave a much more complex picture of home citizens' motivations, using much richer and more varied psychological vocabulary and concepts.

This was already evident in the examples considered above from Colophon, Priene and Mylasa: in those, the motivations of citizen benefactors were explained through clauses beginning with participles of verbs of thinking and judging, to explain the internal reflection which had persuaded them to choose the path of civic engagement. Other aspects of this psychological turn included increasing interest in decrees in the role of civic education in forming the character and ideas of citizens. This was often described in quite complex psychological terms, including reference to the influence of education on citizens' souls (*psychai*) themselves.[70] This civic education (*paideia*) was explicitly presented as at the root of the considered, reliable civic dispositions of good citizens.[71] The specific demands of the common good in a particular situation could even be presented as a matter for individual reflection and conscientious decision by informed, dedicated citizens: in a slightly earlier text, the Cos-Calymna *homopoliteia* of the later third century citizens had to promise, in a pledge first quoted above, to vote in accordance with 'whatever seems to me (ὅ κά μοι δοκῇι) to be beneficial for the *demos*',[72] something which might differ between two different equally well-intentioned citizens.

Abstract reflection about the psychology of civic virtue, previously mainly the preserve of philosophy and the most intellectual of Classical Athenian speeches,[73] had thus become by the later Hellenistic period a sufficiently mainstream and urgent civic concern to gain prominence even in the routine, pragmatic, widely accessible forum of debates and inscribed decrees about honours.[74] To couch the approach of relevant decrees in the terms of Greek philosophical thinking about freedom, the citizens who received honours in the mainly later Hellenistic inscriptions discussed above can be said to have fulfilled the conditions, not so much for being free (*eleutheros*), as for being 'liberal' or 'free-spirited' (*eleutherios*): they made considered, constructive, intelligent choices, not compelled by the pressures of material want or greed associated with slaves and the slavish.[75] The word *eleutherios* itself is rare in inscriptions,[76] but there is a different very significant overlap of vocabulary between Hellenistic epigraphy and this current in Greek philosophy: the word *prohairesis* ('choice'), and the closely related word *hairesis*. In one of his classic formulations of the distinction between civic and slavish lifestyles, Aristotle claims that there could never be a polis of slaves or 'the other animals', because slaves and animals do not share in true happiness (*eudaimonia*) or in living in accordance with *prohairesis* (reflective choice).[77] This notion of *prohairesis*, an ethical choice formed from a distinctive mixture of rational deliberation and desire, is central to Aristotle's whole conception of virtuous (and vicious) action.[78]

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[69] For the formulaic expressions of value in Classical Athenian honorary decrees, see C. Veligianni-Terzi, *Wertbegriffe in den attischen Ehrendekreten der klassischen Zeit* (Stuttgart, 1997).
[70] See *I.Priene*$^2$ 68, ll. 74–7; *I.Sestos* 1 (120s BC), ll. 71–2.
[71] Consider *SEG* 39.1243, col. I; *I.Iasos* 98 (first century BC).
[72] *IG* XII 4 1 152, ll. 27–9.
[73] For the latter, see D. Allen, 'Talking about Revolution: on Political Change in Fourth-Century Athens and Historiographic Method', in S. Goldhill and R. Osborne (eds.), *Rethinking Revolutions through Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, 2006), 183–211; D. Allen, *Why Plato Wrote* (Chichester and Malden, 2010), Part II, discussing certain speeches of Demosthenes and Aeschines.
[74] Compare L. Robert, *Hellenica 11/12* (Paris, 1960), 213; L. Robert, 'Sur les inscriptions d'Ephèse', *RPh* ser. 3, no. 4, 7–84 (12, n. 1).
[75] Compare Aristotle *Politics* 1338b2–4.
[76] But note its use to praise a doctor's treatment of his patients, in keeping with his education, in *IG* V I 1145 (Gytheion, first century BC), ll. 25–7.
[77] Aristotle *Politics* 1280a30–3.
[78] See, for example, Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* 1106b36; 1113a10-11.

In more everyday civic rhetoric, from which many examples are presented in the following pages, *prohairesis* was used to describe something slightly different, though closely related: something closer to what Aristotle himself would call an ἕξις προαιρετική,[79] a long-term 'preferential disposition' to make certain kinds of choices,[80] itself the product of long-term aspiration, habituation and repeated choices.[81] It was thus used there to capture a disposition which was itself chosen, at least indirectly, but also then issued in further choices. As Allen has argued, this kind of usage begins to appear in the more sophisticated, abstract speeches of certain orators of the Athenian democracy after c. 350 BC, as a way of describing the civic dispositions of citizens.[82] This usage was quite slow to enter the usually more pedestrian and demotic rhetoric of inscriptions for public consumption. It begins to appear in later fourth-century inscriptions of Greek cities as a way of describing the 'dispositions' of new Hellenistic kings, and their powerful agents, to be favourable to particular cities.[83] This usage in relation to external potentates is attested throughout the Hellenistic period. From the third century BC onwards, *prohairesis* was also sometimes used to describe the 'disposition' of the *demos* of a particular city.[84] It is perhaps not surprising that cities should have readily referred to the 'preferential dispositions' of powerful kings and foreigners, or of whole, autonomous poleis. More interestingly, from the third century BC onwards,[85] and most commonly after c. 200 BC,[86] cities also praised their own individual citizens, and benevolent citizens of other cities, for their individual *prohaireseis*, usually extended, ongoing *prohaireseis* to act benevolently towards the city, fusions of desire, emotion and rational thought.[87] Although the word was used alongside other terms for favourable dispositions to the *demos*, its connection with 'choice' certainly remained alive: for example, Polemaios of Colophon was praised for his *prohairesis* of life, in whose benefits he wished to make his fellow citizens sharers (κοινωνοὺς ... τῆς τοῦ βίου προαιρέσεως).[88]

There are several potential strong objections to seeing this 'psychological turn' in decrees, including the increasing interest in *prohairesis*, as part of a vibrant stream of distinctive, civic humanist thinking. Perhaps the most obvious counter-interpretation would be to see the psychological turn as a straightforward reflection of a move towards greater hierarchy in poleis' organisation and culture: a step away from civic equality and civic humanism. As Gauthier argued, modifying the arguments of Veyne,[89] cities' political life underwent a decisive shift around the second century BC, especially after c. 150 BC: while

[79] Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* 1106b36.
[80] Compare J. Glucker, *Antiochus and the Late Academy* (Göttingen, 1978), 169–74, discussing this usage in Hellenistic epigraphy and Polybius.
[81] Compare D. Charles, *Aristotle's Philosophy of Action* (London, 1984), esp. 137-43; A.A. Long, *Epictetus: a Stoic and Socratic Guide to Life* (Oxford, 2002), 212-14.
[82] Allen, 'Talking about Revolution'.
[83] See *IG* II$^2$ 469 (Athens, 306/305 BC), ll. 6-7, and 558 (303/2 BC), l. 13.
[84] See, for example, *I.Priene*$^2$ 107, new edition of *I.Priene* 8 (c. 330–300/286/85 BC; decree of Priene for Phokaia, Nisyros and Astypalaia, and foreign judges they had sent), ll. 38–40; *I.Priene*$^2$ 28, new edition of *I.Priene* 17 (Priene, after 278/77 BC; decree for Sotas), ll. 43–6; *I.Milet* I 3 145 (Miletus, 200/199 BC; decree for Eudemos, school-founder), ll. 80–1.
[85] E.g. *IG* XII 6 1 11 (Samos, after 243/2 BC; decree for Boulagoras), ll. 53–4.
[86] Many examples of this usage from this later period in relation to home citizens are discussed in the rest of this section. In addition to those, consider, for example, *IG* II$^2$ 1006 (Athens, 122/1 BC), ll. 32–3. For this usage in decrees for individual citizens of other cities, see n. 91 below.
[87] For these developments in the use of the word, compare A. Chaniotis, 'Affective Diplomacy: Emotional Scripts between Greek Communities and Roman Authorities during the Republic', in D. Cairns and L. Fulkerson (eds.), *Emotions between Greece and Rome (*London, 2015), 87–103 (96–7). For the intellectual component of *prohairesis*, accompanying its emotional component, see especially *IG* V 1 1370 (Kalamai, c. 50–1 BC), l. 4.
[88] *SEG* 39.1243, col. I, ll. 11–16.
[89] P. Veyne, *Le pain et le cirque : sociologie historique d'un pluralisme politique* (Paris, 1976).

many traditional civic institutions endured, an increasingly narrow civic elite began to exercise much greater dominance in civic life, gaining new opportunities to exercise civic leadership and power without always undergoing the rigorous scrutiny from civic institutions associated with traditional, rotating magistracies. For Gauthier, the increasingly abstract and psychological quality of later Hellenistic decrees for citizens was a reflection of this process: after the eclipse of the Hellenistic kingdoms by the Romans, cities began sometimes to treat their own elite benefactors as quasi-kings, imbued with paternalistic affection towards their cities.[90] The development in the use of the word *prohairesis* in decrees, outlined above, might lend some support to this theory: a term first applied to kings came to be applied to elite benefactors.

However, this interpretation cannot account for the whole phenomenon, including the orientation of much later Hellenistic psychological rhetoric: as has already been seen, decrees tended to represent benefactors' complex motivations and choices as intricately bound up with membership of a participatory civic community. Sometimes, as in the examples discussed at the start of this section, benefactors were explicitly said to recognise their interdependence with their fellow citizens: their fortunes were inextricably entwined. More generally, citizens' psychological states, including their *prohaireseis*, tended to be presented, in a truly 'developmental', civic humanist manner, as closely embedded in civic relationships and institutions.

For one thing, as discussed above, decrees often stressed the role of civic education and habituation in forming and sustaining citizens' dispositions and *prohaireseis*. It might be objected that cities also praised in often interchangeable ways the *prohaireseis* of foreign benefactors, usually citizens of other cities who would not have benefited from the honouring city's local civic education.[91] However, even those foreigners would normally have benefited from similar civic education in their home city, part of an increasingly unified civic world, as well as exposure to the honouring city's virtuous ethos:[92] they too were, like home citizens, good civic Greeks, beneficiaries of polis education and habituation.

Moreover, trusted foreigners as well as home citizens could benefit directly from the other 'developmental' role of the honouring polis: its role in enabling and encouraging the sympathetic, supportive, long-term relationships among fellow citizens, and between citizens and favoured foreigners, which allowed *prohaireseis* and similar dispositions to flourish. Indeed, a *prohairesis* was almost always presented in decrees as relational: as directed towards other people, especially the honouring *demos*.[93] The implication was that a well-functioning polis was, if not a necessary, at least a very propitious environment for developing, sustaining and exercising genuine, stable, informed choice. Within such a polis, individuals could enjoy relationships with their fellows which were sufficiently close, trusting, equal and open to enable them to interact through unconstrained, sincere *prohaireseis*, as well as to engage in mutual ethical education. In this environment,

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[90] See Ph. Gauthier, *Les cités grecques et leurs bienfaiteurs* (Athens and Paris, 1985), esp. 56-9, critically discussed in R. van Bremen, *The Limits of Participation: Women and Civic Life in the Greek East in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods* (Amsterdam, 1996), 11-12. On the distinctive political culture of the later Hellenistic period, see also F. Quaß, *Die Honoratiorenschicht in den Städten des griechischen Ostens* (Stuttgart, 1993) and P. Fröhlich and Chr. Müller (eds.), *Citoyenneté et participation à la basse époque hellénistique : actes de la table ronde des 22 et 23 mai 2004* (Geneva, 2005).

[91] See, for example, among many surviving examples from after c. 200 BC: *IG* XI 4 789 (Delos, early second century BC), ll. 14–15; *FD* III 2.91 (Delphi, 167 BC), ll. 10–11.

[92] Cf. *SEG* 39.1243, col. III, ll. 36–7.

[93] See, for example, among very many cases, *I.Magnesia* 92b (early second century BC), ll. 10–11 (*prohairesis* of the citizen Apollophanes, benefactor of the theatre, towards his *patris*). For the value of relational, mutual *prohaireseis*, compare Aristotle *Eudemian Ethics* 1236b1–3.

individuals could trust that a sincere ethical choice to be public-spirited would not lay them open to exploitation by those willing to capitalise on others' generosity. On the contrary, it would bring both fulfilment and honour. Even the use of similar rhetoric in relation to the most powerful foreigners, including kings and royal officials, can also be interpreted along these lines: its point was not to stress (for example) the king's regal will, but rather to integrate the powerful outsider within an enlarged civic (quasi-)community based on ethics and trust.[94]

Such strong insistence on civic humanist values and psychology, even in the routine, pragmatic medium of civic epigraphy, need not be seen as a denial of Hellenistic changes, a make-believe construction of civic continuity. It should rather be seen as a grounded but imaginative response to a changing environment. Intensified interest in individual choice and motivation was partly a recognition of changes in social reality. Those born into citizenship in a Greek city were now less likely to be automatically, viscerally bound to it for life. The wealthy had plentiful opportunities to exert initiative above and beyond the scrutiny of civic institutions, or even to leave the polis – or even the civic world – altogether. They could enjoy double or multiple citizenships in different cities, which became increasingly common by the later Hellenistic period;[95] enter the courts and administration of the Hellenistic kingdoms or the new Roman Empire; or migrate to new metropoleis such as Alexandria and Rome. Even the less wealthy had increased opportunities to migrate, or to adopt mobile lifestyles as (for example) traders or mercenaries. This all made it a practical reality that ideals of civic engagement and solidarity, the lifestyle of the 'polis fanatic',[96] had always to be consciously embraced by participants, rather than unthinkingly assimilated.

As well as recognising this new reality of increased personal choice, the Hellenistic cities were also attempting to shape the choices made. Especially after c. 150 BC, they had to take account of sharp inequality, a lack of automatic interpersonal trust, and the limited efficacy of institutions and laws alone. Since formal constraints were inadequate in themselves to regulate citizens' behaviour and check anti-civic tendencies, it was crucial for citizens to scrutinise the psychology and choices of their fellow citizens for signs of integrity or potential defection. At the same time, they had to cajole influential citizens towards voluntary embrace of civic virtue and the common good, so that they would use the individual initiative open to them for public-spirited ends.[97]

This made it imperative for poleis to use all means at their disposal, from civic *paideia* to the honorific process itself, to analyse and shape leading citizens' motivations. This helps to explain the sharper psychological insight and complexity of later Hellenistic decrees, as well as their self-conscious efforts actively to shape citizens' thinking and desires. Decrees' authors pursued this latter aim partly through characteristic 'hortatory clauses', urging other citizens to emulate the benefactor being honoured,[98] but also through their representation of the habits and lifestyle of the honorand himself as dignified, praiseworthy and desirable. Emphasis on personal choice, or *prohairesis*, was central to this rhetoric: decrees tried to show that civic engagement within a polis was much better suited to genuine freedom of choice than more capricious environments which might attract citizens, such as a Hellenistic court or a cosmopolitan port society such as Delos.

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[94] Compare Ma, *Antiochos III*, ch. 4; J. Ma, *Statues and Cities: Honorific Portraits and Civic Identity in the Hellenistic World* (Oxford, 2013), esp. Part I.

[95] See the papers in Heller and Pont, *Patrie d'origine et patries électives*.

[96] M. Wörrle, 'Vom tugendsamen Jüngling zum "gestreßten" Euergeten. Überlegungen zum Bürgerbild hellenistischer Ehrendekrete', in M. Wörrle and P. Zanker (eds.), *Stadtbild und Bürgerbild im Hellenismus* (Munich, 1995), 241–50.

[97] Compare Allen, 'Talking about Revolution', on *prohairesis* in later Classical Athenian oratory.

[98] See, for example, *I.Sestos* 1, ll. 86–92.

It might still be objected, however, that *prohairesis* within the polis was open only to members of the very wealthy male elite, who had the resources to obtain a sophisticated education and to contribute substantially to their cities. It is true that only the *prohaireseis* of elite citizens who received honorary decrees were singled out for public praise. Nonetheless, this elite group did at least, by the later Hellenistic period, include women whose *prohaireseis* could be celebrated.[99] Moreover, other, less prominent citizens could still emulate elite citizens' considered, engaged choices. All citizens could participate in the collective ethical *prohairesis* of a city's *demos* to appreciate and honour the virtues of a benefactor.[100] Decrees' hortatory clauses could also explicitly express the aspiration to encourage a broader spectrum of citizens, even 'many citizens', to emulate those acting on a *prohairesis* to aid the polis.[101] Moreover, an alternative stage for many less elite citizens to act on *prohaireseis* was provided by the very many civic associations of the Hellenistic world, microcosms of full poleis incorporating citizens, outsiders or a combination of both, with their own miniature civic institutions and practices.[102] For example, an association of worshippers of Aphrodite (Aphrodisiastai) in Ephesus, perhaps an association of merchants including foreigners, passed an honorary decree expressing the wish to urge those with a *hairesis* to love the good (τοὺς αἱρουμένους φιλαγαθεῖν) to give attention to common affairs.[103] This rhetoric overlapped with that of a more official sub-division of the Ephesian community: the young men of Ephesus, ephebes and *neoi*, passed a decree in the first century BC praising their gymnasiarch Diodoros for wishing to make worthy of remembrance the '*hairesis* which he has about him, oriented towards the finest things' (τὴν οὖσαν περὶ αὐτὸν αἵρεσιν πρὸς τὰ κάλλ[ισ]τα).[104]

After the objection emphasising hierarchy, the second potential strong objection to seeing decrees' psychological turn as an intensification in their civic humanist tendencies would be to interpret it instead as evidence of a broader turn inward: a shift in focus from public, civic affairs and glory to the internal lives of individuals, prefiguring the rise of Christianity and of Christian focus on the soul. It is true that such a shift is detectable in some Greek thinking of the Hellenistic and early Roman Imperial periods, especially some Stoic and Epicurean philosophy. This tendency was brought to a head by the early Imperial Stoic Epictetus.

Epictetus even offered a distinctive conception of *prohairesis* itself. As Long has shown, Epictetus recast the word *prohairesis* to describe something like a faculty of volition: a 'mentality' or 'agency' or 'capacity' which enables humans to make choices, and can remain immune to even the most severe pressure from outside. In Epictetus' thought, in keeping with the Stoic tradition, the only secure route to virtue, and thus happiness, is to focus on those things which are truly within one's own control, while ignoring or neutrally accepting external factors such as political developments. Central to this exercise is the maintaining of a good *prohairesis* within one's soul, which no tyrant, misfortune or disorderly internal desires can dominate or divert from its purposes.[105] This and related tendencies in Epictetus' thought are central to Hannah Arendt's influential argument that the

[99] Consider *SEG* 33.1036 (Kyme, second century BC), ll. 30–4. On the civic role of women in this period: van Bremen, *The Limits of Participation*.
[100] See n. 84 above.
[101] See *IG* XII 6 1 11, ll. 52–4; compare *I.Sestos* 1, ll. 86–92.
[102] See I. Arnaoutoglou, Thusias heneka kai sunousias*: Private Religious Associations in Hellenistic Athens* (Athens, 2003); P. Ismard, *La cité des réseaux. Athènes et ses associations, VI^e^-I^er^ siècle av. J.-C.* (Paris, 2010).
[103] *SEG* 43.773 (second century BC), ll. 12–14.
[104] *I.Ephesos* 6, ll. 23–5.
[105] Long, *Epictetus*, 218–222. See, for example, Epictetus *Discourses* 2.2.1–7. For the broader intellectual context see M. Frede, *A Free Will. Origins of the Notion in Ancient Thought*(edited by A. A. Long) (Berkeley, 2011).

post-Classical Greeks fatally abandoned their distinctive interest in the freedom which comes through action, performed within the polis, in favour of an interest in the supposed inner freedom of the soul, which can be achieved even if one is a 'slave in the world'.[106]

It is certainly true that decrees' increased psychological complexity reflected and promoted the development of more sophisticated understandings of human motivation, thought and desire. However, as the examples already studied demonstrate, this development was not tied to a diminished interest in action. For example, in civic rhetoric, *prohairesis* was not treated as a relatively content-free, context-independent faculty of volition, as in Epictetus' thought. Rather, the drafters of decrees treated a *prohairesis* as a substantive ethical disposition, with close and inevitable links to particular actions in the civic world.[107] Indeed, honorary decrees usually described benefactors' specific actions and benefactions, sometimes in great detail,[108] as well as the underlying psychological states.

Those psychological states, including *prohairesis*, were treated as valuable partly because they could inspire citizens, not merely to accept, but actively to shape the external world, through civic-spirited action. The worldliness of civic *prohairesis* is perhaps most vividly reflected in a late third century inscription from Chios, praising those citizens who had contributed to the building of civic fortifications 'through their own *prohairesis*', 'wishing that their fatherland should remain free and autonomous through everything'.[109] These citizens' *prohairesis* was anything but a purely internal will; it was intimately linked with war, defence and collective freedom in the world. This is, admittedly, an unusual case: many other Hellenistic citizens had to find a more pacific and cultural focus for their *prohaireseis*, as diplomats or as social and cultural benefactors of their fellow citizens.[110] However, even *prohaireseis* with a predominantly cultural focus could be presented as aimed at external glory in the world: in honouring their gymnasiarch Paramonos in 95 BC, the young men (*neoi*) of Thessalonike deemed it 'just' that those employing a glory-loving *prohairesis* (τοὺς φιλοδόξῳ προ̣α̣[ιρέ]σει χρ̣ω̣μένους), such as this man, should receive appropriate honours.[111] Moreover, in this and many other cases, the *prohaireseis* of good cultural benefactors were still seen as closely linked with action: the active contributions of Paramonos included spending money, organising sacrifices and honours, and training and disciplining the young men in the gymnasium.[112] These would not have been treated as trivial activities: they were designed to create the next generation of virtuous, engaged citizens.

This analysis has some overlap with Foucault's interpretation of post-Classical Greek interiority and sense of self, influenced by the work of Veyne on civic politics. According to Foucault, the post-Classical ancient Greeks did not simply withdraw from politics and action, as Arendt and others have suggested. Rather, they problematised to a new degree the relationship between the individual self, social and political roles and identities, and action. Since these three things were no longer treated as always automatically linked, it became necessary to investigate more deeply how and why the individual self performs certain accepted political roles and characteristic activities – or engages with the social world at all.[113] Internal psychology and external action were thus treated, not as exclusive opposites, but as locked together in a close-knit dynamic relationship. The Hellenistic cities, especially

[106] H. Arendt, *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*, with an introduction by J. Kohn (London, 2006; orig. 1961), 146, to be understood within the context of the rest of her ch. 4, 'What is freedom?'.
[107] Compare Glucker, *Antiochus*, 173–4.
[108] See, for example, many of the long later Hellenistic decrees discussed above, such as *I.Priene*$^2$ 68–70.
[109] F. G. Maier, *Griechische Mauerbauinschriften* (Heidelberg, 1959), no. 9; *SEG* 19.578.
[110] For the case of diplomats consider *SEG* 39.1243 from Colophon (discussed above).
[111] *IG* X 2 1 4, ll. 16–17.
[112] *IG* X 2 1 4, ll. 7–16.
[113] M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, vol. 3: The Care of the Self* (translated by R. Hurley) (New York, 1988), 82–95.

the later Hellenistic cities, might even be said to have developed an ideology which achieved a mean between excessively political and excessively ethical or psychological conceptions of individual freedom. According to Hellenistic inscriptions' ideology, as reconstructed here, the individual citizen's freedom has a rich psychological and ethical dimension, but it can also – perhaps must also – be exercised in civic relationships and activities, structured by civic institutions.

A final significant objection to my argument would be to claim that the Hellenistic cities did not, in fact, allow or celebrate any genuine choice for their citizens: choice of one alternative over another. There are weaknesses in this objection. Bad *prohaireseis*, worthy of disapproval, were certainly conceivable for Hellenistic Greeks,[114] even though they were understandably not foregrounded in decrees. The kind of civic *prohairesis* celebrated in decrees was thus a choice of this lifestyle over a less public-spirited alternative. It might still be objected that Hellenistic cities did not allow for a range of different *legitimate prohaireseis*: a properly educated and socially integrated citizen, who rose above base desires, would always come to the same choice of life.

There are, however, some signs of pluralism about legitimate life-choices in Hellenistic civic ideology, especially after c. 150 BC. By the later second century BC, some time after *prohairesis* and *hairesis* had come to be standard terms in civic rhetoric for individuals' civic *Weltanschauungen*, Greeks had begun to refer to the doctrines and practices of the different philosophical schools (e.g. Stoic, Epicurean, Peripatetic, Academic) as themselves different *haireseis*: different 'schools of thought' or 'persuasions'. For an individual to identify with one of these schools was thus for him to make a considered choice of interconnected philosophy and lifestyle.[115] The Hellenistic Athenians, who hosted the main Athenian philosophical schools, recognised in their official civic discourse the simultaneous validity of different philosophical *haireseis*. For example, they sent on their famous 'philosophers' embassy' to Rome in 155 BC the heads of the Stoa, Academy and Peripatos.[116] The late Hellenistic ephebic curriculum also included lectures at the different venues of the Academy, Lyceum and Ptolemaion: these places were at least symbolic of different philosophical approaches, and may well also each have hosted advocates of different philosophies.[117]

Post-Classical civic Greeks could also explicitly acknowledge the validity of different possible choices of lifestyle. These included different choices of a particular sphere of civic life on which to focus: for example, politics, administration, commerce, athletics, literature, philosophy or history. Plutarch, for example, argued in the early Imperial period that the life of active political leadership is itself a distinctive course, which should be pursued only by those most suited to it, who can embrace it through a stable, reflective *prohairesis* based on judgement and reason, as opposed to whim or opportunism.[118] This echoes an example discussed above. The later Hellenistic Colophonians praised their citizen Polemaios for choosing to make his fellow citizens sharers in the fruits of his '*prohairesis* of life' as a successful athlete. Polemaios subsequently recognised the value of another lifestyle choice, as a complement to his athletic successes: engagement in political leadership.[119] This is later

[114] Consider Polybius 2.56.5; 60.5–6.
[115] For full discussion see Glucker, *Antiochus*, 174–92. On ancient philosophies as 'ways of life', see recently J. Cooper, *Pursuits of Wisdom: Six Ways of Life in Ancient Philosophy from Socrates to Plotinus* (Princeton, 2012).
[116] See, for example, Plutarch *Cato Maior* 22; M. Haake, *Der Philosoph in der Stadt: Untersuchungen zur öffentlichen Rede über Philosophen und Philosophie in den hellenistischen Poleis* (Munich, 2007), 106–117.
[117] *IG* II$^2$ 1006 (122/1 BC), ll. 19–20, with the cautionary remarks of Haake, *Der Philosoph in der Stadt*, 44–55.
[118] Plutarch *Precepts of Statecraft* 798c-799b.
[119] *SEG* 39.1243, col. I, ll. 11–22.

said to have relieved other citizens of the burden of political activity, so that they could concentrate on their own affairs (*ta idia*);[120] these would presumably have included pursuit of other, less political *prohaireseis* within the polis.

A later Hellenistic decree could even explicitly praise the individuality of a citizen's *prohairesis*. The second-century female benefactor Archippe of Kyme was given special authority by decree to undertake refurbishment of the city's council-chamber 'in accordance with her own trust and *prohairesis*' (κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν πίστιν καὶ προαίρεσιν).[121] There is an interesting use of similar phrasing to convey a more wide-ranging personal outlook in a first-century BC Iasian decree for the young citizen Melanion, who was praised for giving a fine demonstration of his 'own *prohairesis*'[122] (καλὸν ὑπόδειγμα τῆς ἰδίας προαιρέσεως καταβαλλόμενος) through his self-controlled behaviour, worthy of emulation. This emphasis on the distinctiveness of his personal *prohairesis* must partly have been intended to indicate that he had assimilated, and made his own, the family virtues he had inherited, also emphasised in the decree. Nonetheless, it must also be significant that Melanion has at this point just been praised at length for his education, including his philosophical studies: the juxtaposition implies that he has developed his own sophisticated, personal outlook and choice of life.[123]

This is not to deny that the Iasians also strove in this decree, in keeping with a familiar pattern, to show that Melanion's personal choice and individuality were safely embedded in civic norms and institutions, including ideals of self-control. This approach can itself, however, be interpreted as evidence of an anxious awareness of the possibility of individualistic personal choice trumping or disrupting communal norms and needs. The subsequent development of the words *prohairesis* and especially *hairesis* in the Roman Empire hovers over earlier usages: *hairesis*, or 'heresy', came to describe a disruptive, non-conformist creed or attitude, or the 'sect' endorsing it. This development tapped into the Hellenistic uses of the word to describe both philosophical persuasions and personal life choices.[124] The Hellenistic civic Greeks were far more tolerant of informed personal choice or *hairesis*, or even idiosyncratic thinking. Nonetheless, they were aware of the risk that *hairesis* might slide into disruptive wilfulness, dogmatism or eccentricity: it was crucial that the individual citizen's *hairesis* should remain distinctively civic and self-controlled, tied to recognition of the civic humanist insight that communal political life is the key to true individual fulfilment.

## 4. Conclusion: new Hellenistic models of citizen liberty

The Hellenistic poleis were certainly no ideal cities: socio-economic and political inequalities, for example, were marked. Moreover, some of the ideals discussed in this paper were no doubt sometimes abused for short-term gain, not least by members of wealthy civic elites eager to justify their privileges and evade scrutiny through a veneer of virtue. Nonetheless, as this paper has argued, Hellenistic cities, and especially their values and ideologies, offer valuable case-studies for modern students of civic and republican government and political culture. This is not least because Hellenistic cities experimented with adaptations to the civic ideals they had inherited. In particular, they experimented with

[120] *SEG* 39.1243, col. II, ll. 16–18.
[121] *SEG* 33.1040, ll. 21–3.
[122] This expression could also be used of a foreign benefactor (*SEG* 3.468, Thaumakoi in Achaia Phthiotis, first century BC, l. 14) or a whole *demos* (*SEG* 42.1065, Claros, 200-150 BC, ll. 16–20).
[123] *I.Iasos* 98, esp. ll. 10–22.
[124] Compare Glucker, *Antiochus*, 186–7, 192; M. Simon, 'From Greek *Hairesis* to Christian Heresy', in W. R. Schoedel and R. L.Wilken (eds.), *Early Christian Literature and the Classical Intellectual Tradition* (Paris, 1979), 101–116; E. Iricinschi and H.M. Zellentin (eds.), *Heresy and Identity in Late Antiquity* (Tübingen, 2008), introduction, 3–5.

ways of combining robust and demanding civic institutions and expectations with distinctive types of individual freedom.

Some Hellenistic Greeks, such as Polybius, were in tune with the strictly republican debates and ideals of the Roman Republic, emphasising that collective freedom from tyranny brings a special type of freedom also for the parts within the whole. However, other types of concern with the individual citizen's freedom were more prominent in mainstream Hellenistic civic discourse. For one thing, Hellenistic cities showed a distinctive interest in the quasi-liberal 'protective' freedoms of the individual citizen, especially individual freedoms concerning property and property-disputes. Indeed, they even normalised the summoning of foreign judges to decide difficult financial disputes: as shown above, this must have been partly driven by particular concern with safeguarding the free access of individual citizens to fair, neutral dispute resolution, even if that required some sacrifice of local sovereignty.

More significantly, Hellenistic cities were also innovative, especially after c. 150 BC, in adapting civic humanist ideals and practices, in such a way as to give more scope to individual choice and to diversity within the citizen-body. Indeed, Hellenistic cities' decrees, especially later ones, placed a new emphasis, previously unusual in such practical applications of Greek civic humanism, on individual ethical choice, within the scope of civic law and institutions. According to their ideology, cities were not 'forcing citizens to be free', but rather providing the ideal context for them to develop genuine, reflective, sustainable ethical choices, through participation in the unique types of education and social interaction made possible by a polis. In changed times, which created more space for culture and philosophy within civic life, especially in the later Hellenistic polis, citizens had wide scope to develop their ethical outlook and choices through participation in gentle, reflective, cosmopolitan politics, increasingly open to women and foreigners as well as male citizens.[125]

This all makes the Hellenistic cities well worthy of attention in contemporary debates about civic humanism, the common good and freedom: they offer revealing precedents for modern theorists engaged in developing political theories and values which combine a civic humanist insistence on the intrinsic value of civic participation and dedication to the common good, on the one hand, with the embrace of individual choice and pluralism, on the other.[126] Treating ancient Greek politics as a serious civic model need not involve aspirations to 'slip back into the womb of the polis':[127] the post-Classical evidence shows that an ancient Greek polis could aspire to be much more cosmopolitan, cultural, open and individualist, and less war-like and close-knit, than either the modern stereotype or the earlier Classical reality of polis life. Indeed, the Hellenistic cities' example suggests that, in certain circumstances, a civic humanist polis can itself promote voluntary, free-spirited, reflective membership and loyalty, of types which do not stifle individual choice and difference, but subtly encourage them.

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[125] These shifts towards a style of politics giving more prominence to the individual and to culture were, of course, partly developments of earlier Greek trends, already gaining particular strength in the early and mid-fourth century BC: see V. Azoulay, 'Isocrate, Xénophon ou le politique transfiguré', *REA* 108.1 (2006), 133–53; S. B. Ferrario, *Historical Agency and the 'Great Man' in Classical Greece* (Cambridge, 2014).

[126] See, for example, D. Villa, *Public Freedom* (Princeton, 2008), esp. 329, 352–3, building on arguments of Arendt (e.g. pp. 99–100 on Arendt's idealised vision of Periclean Athens).

[127] Skinner, 'Paradoxes of Political Liberty', 249.

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